

The Ecumenical COURIER



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ECUMENICAL MEETINGS IN INDIA

Meetings of the Central Committee and the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches will be held in Lucknow, India, as the new year begins (December 29-January 9). The enlarged meeting of the Central Committee has invited representation from all Asian churches which are members of the World Council. It will discuss the Asian situation as the concern of Christians everywhere; the relevance of the Christian hope (theme of the 1954 World Council Assembly) to our times; the correlative goals of the ecumenical movement—missions and unity. Among other important ecumenical gatherings scheduled for India during the coming weeks are a conference of the World Council Study Department (December 27-30) and the Third World Conference of Christian Youth (December 11-25).

A group of delegates to the Third World Conference of Christian Youth set sail for India. Some 300 delegates from 50 countries will attend.



EVANGELISM — SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY — RACE — LAITY ARE CONCERNS OF ECUMENICAL STUDY GROUPS IN U.S.A.

The U.S.A. Study Committee of the World Council of Churches met at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., on November 14 and 15, to consider concerns of the churches which will have major emphasis at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, at Evanston, Illinois, in August, 1954.

Four popular leaflets, prepared for study by the churches, were presented by Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, chairman of the American group. These deal with:

1. *Commission on EVANGELISM*: "The Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life." (Chairman: Canon Theodore O. Wedel, USA; Vice-chairman: Professor D. G. Moses, India; Secretary: Dr. H. Hoekendijk, Holland.)

2. *Commission on SOCIAL QUESTIONS*: "The Responsible Society in a World Perspective." (Co-Chairmen: Professor John C. Bennett, USA; Dr. C. L. Patijn, Holland; Secretary: Rev. Paul Abrecht, USA.)

3. *Commission on INTER-GROUP RELATIONS*: "The Church Amid Racial and Ethnic Tensions." (Chairman: Dr. Roswell P. Barnes, USA; Vice-chairman: Professor G. Baez-Camargo, Mexico; Secretary: Rev. Robert S. Bilheimer, USA.)

4. *Commission on THE LAITY*: "The Christian in His Vocation." (Chairman: Professor Hendrik Kraemer, Holland; Secretary: Dr. H. H. Walz, Germany; Dr. Eugene Barnett, USA)

A report on the general theme of the Assembly, which deals with "the Christian hope," has already been distributed to member churches of

the World Council of Churches for pre-Evanston study, and two other documents will soon be placed in their hands. These include the "Faith and Order" material, based on the theme "Our Unity in Christ and the Disunity of Our Churches," and the "International Relations" material on "Christians in the Struggle for World Community."

Local church organizations, *ad hoc* study groups, or official denominational bodies are invited to undertake study of any of the materials, and to submit their findings to the relevant Commission for incorporation in the Assembly reports. The study materials may be obtained through the New York office of the World Council of Churches.

The pre-Evanston study on Evangelism: "the mission of the Church to those outside her life" received special attention at the Buck Hill Falls meeting. It poses the question as to "what are the main obstacles in the life and theology of the churches which hinder them from becoming and acting like the apostolic band which Christ intended His Church to be?" The preliminary study also asks: "What kind of a structure should a church have which resolutely endeavors to live up to its missionary obligations?"

Referring to the "introversion of the average Christian congregation," the report asks whether the churches have taken their own self-cultivation too seriously, forgetting that "they are instruments of God's purpose to redeem the world."

A paper presented by Dr. Jesse Bader, of the National Council of Churches, dealt with the subject of evangelism in relation to the churches of the United States.

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FAITH AND ORDER, the report of the Third World Conference at Lund, Sweden, August 15-18, 1952, has just been published by the SCM Press, in London, for the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. This report is available from the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y., at 50 cents each or 45 cents each in lots of five or more.

BOOKS AND REPORTS

CHRISTIANITY—RACE—AND SOUTH AFRICAN PEOPLE is the title under which the report of Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, concerning a visit to South Africa in April and May of this year, has been published in the United States. The report highlights the fact that the greatest hope for South Africa is that the Christian churches of that area will work together to help the people meet the urgent demands growing out of an explosively changing social environment. He recommends that opportunities be sought to increase the contacts between the South African churches and the churches in other parts of the world, pointing out that owing to its geographical situation, South Africa has less than its due share in ecumenical contacts. He recommends the exchange of professors and visiting lecturers, scholarships at theological seminaries or at the Graduate School for Ecumenical Students at Celigny, Switzerland, and mutual visitation, bringing the South African churches in closer relations with the churches of other lands. (25¢; 20¢ in lots of 50.)

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THE QUEST FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY, by Robert S. Bilheimer (Association Press, N.Y.C., 181 pages, \$2.50), describes the various currents and cross currents, within and outside the Church, which have produced the great churches and small sects which are part of our American ecclesiastical scene. Ecumenical unity, he finds, is "not to be built, but to be entered into." The structure of this unity, both in the United States and in the world as a whole, Mr. Bilheimer seeks to analyze and describe in comprehensible terms. The present danger, he finds, is "that we yield too much to the comfort of cooperation, and that this pattern may become static" and let the ecumenical movement slip into "comfortable and ineffective habits."

The second part of the book contains descriptions of the positions taken by nine communions, each described by a leader of the church.

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HE THAT GATHERETH is "a first-hand account of the Third World Conference on Faith and Order—held at Lund, Sweden, August 15-28,

1952," by James W. Kennedy. According to the author, "the intention has been to make as clear as possible some of the great issues before the churches." Included are charts showing the background of the Faith and Order Movement, visualizations of some of the most persistent problems, a bibliography, the Lund "Message to the Churches," an account of the main meetings and sessions of the Conference, and a final chapter on "Where Do We Go from Here?" which relates the whole matter to the "local level" and "the cutting edges" of the church. Practical discussion plans will enable local groups to parallel, out of their own experiences, the kind of group thinking and ecumenical growth that took place in the various sections of the Lund Conference. Copies of this publication are available, at 50 cents each or 35 cents in lots of five or more, from the World Council of Churches.

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MEMORANDUM ON THE COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY is a 48-page summary of the positions taken by the C.C.I.A. on issues to come before the seventh session of the UN General Assembly, together with the C.C.I.A. basis for its position on each item. The memorandum was released by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, Director of C.C.I.A., together with Dr. Richard M. Fagley and Dr. Elfan Rees, who are also associated with Dr. Nolde in the work of observation and consultation. Among the key issues treated in the memorandum are Korea, disarmament, refugees, economic assistance, human rights and peace observer commissions.

PENTECOST—MAY 24—A DAY TO EMPHASIZE THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH AS THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TO ECUMENICAL SOLIDARITY.

The sad news comes as we go to press of the death, on December 3, of Estelle (Mrs. C. S.) Harrington, a member of the World Council Central Committee. She had planned to attend the meetings at Lucknow this month.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NATIONAL COUNCIL

The General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. will meet in Denver, Colorado, during the week of December 7. This will be the first General Assembly since the N.C.C. came into existence two years ago. Between two and three thousand persons are expected to attend the meeting, representing Anglican, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches of the United States and Canada, state and local councils of churches, councils of church men and church women, and interdenominational agencies. Student groups and a number of visitors from overseas will add to the color of the meeting.

Among the speakers will be Dr. James H. Robinson, Dr. Frank Laubach, Major General Charles Carpenter, Chief of Chaplains of the Air Force, and Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, who is appointee as permanent representative to the United Nations with the rank of ambassador. Mr. John Foster Dulles, who is unable to attend the meeting, will still be heard through a special tape recording.

Also featured at the meeting will be speeches by Dr. Elfan Rees, a Secretary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, and Bishop Otto Dibelius, Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

Delegates at the meeting will hear reports on projects of the National Council completed

BEQUEST FORM

Friends of the World Council who desire to perpetuate by a legacy their interest in the Ecumenical Movement, may use this simple form of bequest:—

I give and bequeath to the Friends of the World Council of Churches, Inc., incorporated under Section 30 of the Membership Corporation Law of New York State on January 27, 1943, the sum of _____

_____ Dollars (\$ _____)
to be applied to the use and purpose of said corporation.

(Attested signature)

during the past two years and will also consider a number of current programs of the council. Among these programs are: a research study on Christian colleges and the organization of a Faculty Christian Fellowship; new financial counselling and centralized calendar services for state and local councils of churches; a new cooperative ministry for industrial workers in atomic energy centers; and an educational program on the American Christian as a wage earner, a consumer and a citizen concerned with economic policy.

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CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

The new Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies, sponsored jointly by the Ecumenical Institute at Celigny, Switzerland, and the University of Geneva, opened on November 1.

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The United Church of Christ in Japan at its Seventh Biennial Assembly, held in Tokyo on October 21, voted to invite the World Council of Churches to hold its Third Assembly in Tokyo in 1959, which will be the centenary of Japan's evangelization. This invitation will be presented at the meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council at Lucknow, India, December 31-January 9, by Dr. Michio Kozaki, who was re-elected Moderator of the United Church.

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Mrs. Rosa Page Welch, mezzo-soprano, is on an eight-month tour as an "ambassador of Christian friendship" to the peoples of Asia, Africa and islands of the Pacific. She is sponsored by the General Department of United Church Women and by women of the American Baptist and Presbyterian U.S.A. churches.

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Dr. Robbins W. Barstow, Executive Director of the Joint Department of American Communities Overseas, of the National Council of Churches, is visiting the Union of English Speaking Churches for Americans in various cities of Europe and the Near East. Among the churches which Dr. Barstow is visiting are the American Church in Cairo, Egypt; the English Speaking Christian Congregation in Teheran, Iran; the Evangelical Union Church in Istanbul, Turkey; the Community Church of Beirut in Beirut, Lebanon, and the St. Andrews Protestant Church, a new church in Athens, Greece.

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The Call to Missionary Service was the theme of the meeting held by the Russian Christian Student Movement at Bievres, near Paris, October 18-29.

Plans are under way in Kottayam to explore the last of the seven churches said to have been established by St. Thomas the Apostle, in Malabar, 1900 years ago. This church is presumed to be at Mikkekal in the inaccessible mountain forest region, once a great trading center.

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The proposed Christian college on Formosa now has the official approval of the educational authorities on the island. Such approval was necessary under a regulation forbidding the starting of any private schools.

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One hundred and twenty-two students from twenty-three countries are enrolled in seminaries and universities in Europe and North America this year, through the World Council of Churches Scholarship Exchange plan.

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New editions of *Pilgrim's Progress* have been produced in Chinese, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi, bringing to 147 the number of languages and dialects in which this book has been wholly or partially issued.

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There are at present seventy-one Scandinavian Seamen's Churches in ports all over the world. Close co-operation has long existed among the Churches of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in this field, and seamen of any of these nationalities are welcome at the churches and guest homes established in foreign ports.

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An exhibition of contemporary religious art, which "aims to encourage the artists as well as the churches to try new ways of co-operation," was held at Union Theological Seminary, December 1-16, Theologians, art experts, educators and students co-operated in presenting this exhibition of religious art by leading modern artists.

FRIENDS OF WORLD COUNCIL PAY TRIBUTE TO DR. LEIPER

At the annual meeting of the Friends of the World Council of Churches, held on November 21, at the Broadway Tabernacle Church, New York City, a special tribute was given to Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, in honor of his nearly twenty-five years of work on behalf of the ecumenical movement. Dr. Leiper recently left his position as Associate General Secretary of the World Council to return to the Congregational Christian Churches as Executive Secretary of the Missions Council. He was elected a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the World Council of Churches at this meeting and also will continue as Secretary of this organization.

Speakers, introduced by Dr. W. J. Gallagher of Canada, were Dr. Elfan Rees, Advisor on Refugee Affairs to the World Council and a Secretary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, and Miss Anita Fraser, a participant in three Youth Department work camp programs.

Speaking on "The Silver Landmark," Dr. Leiper reviewed the development of ecumenical activities in which he has been active. He said: "In two million miles of travel in more than forty countries, I have actually encountered the living fact of the world Christian community that is emerging. . . . It is for us to see that this process is accelerated, that it is embodied in our own attitudes, is understood in our churches, and supported by our people throughout this great land and the world as a whole."

Dr. Elfan Rees, speaking on "The Century of the Homeless Man," said that where assimilation of refugees is impossible because of lack of good-will or money, and where emigration is impossible because of rigid immigration laws and mounting prejudice, starvation faces many refugees. In view of "the utter inadequacies of public provision for these tragic people," Dr. Rees concluded, "the Church's task today is greater than it has ever been. . . ."



*"For unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."
A Christian Sunday school in India interprets the story of Jesus' birth.*